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- (71) Applicant (*for all designated States except US*): **INSTITUT NATIONAL DE LA SANTE ET DE LA RECHERCHE MEDICALE (INSERM) [FR/FR]; 101, Rue de Tolbiac, F-75013 Paris (FR).**
- (72) Inventors; and
- (75) Inventors/Applicants (*for US only*): **DURANTEL, David [FR/FR]; 26, rue Bonnard, F-69003 Lyon (FR). DURANTEL, Sandra [FR/FR]; 26, rue Bonnard, F-69003 Lyon (FR). TREPO, Christian [FR/FR]; 4, Passage du Verdier Sud, F-69500 Bron (FR). ZOULIM, Fabien [FR/FR]; 5, rue du Paillet, F-69570 Dardilly (FR).**
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(54) Title: METHOD FOR ASSAYING REPLICATION OF HBV AND TESTING SUSCEPTIBILITY TO DRUGS

(57) Abstract: A method for measuring the replication capacity of HBV, e.g. HBV present in a biological sample, possibly in the presence of a pharmaceutical product, in particular an antiviral agent, the method comprising: (a) possibly extracting nucleic acids contained in the biological sample; (b) PCR amplifying HBV nucleic acids using at least two primer pairs selected so as to obtain at least two different amplified HBV genomic fragments which upon assembly represent a linear continuous DNA sequence transcribable in pgRNA; (c) cloning the fragments obtained under (b) into a vector under the control of an heterologous promoter, so producing a vector containing a linear continuous DNA sequence transcribable in pgRNA under control of said promoter; (d) transfecting or transducing susceptible cells with the vector; (e) culturing the transfected or transduced cells in conditions allowing synthesis of HBV pgRNA from the cloned HBV DNA; (f) possibly treating the cultured cells with the pharmaceutical product, in particular antiviral agent; and (g) determining the replication capacity of the HBV, possibly incidence of the pharmaceutical product, preferably antiviral agent, on viral gene expression and/or viral replication.



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